

Hi,

My name is Jorge, I'm 25 years old, I'm from Madrid, Spain, and I'm going to describe the experience that I had within the EVS project "Volunteers t(w)o local community" in Zabok, Croatia.

I'm writing this article 2 months after the activity, so I have a better perspective of what I did and how to explain it.

First of all, I took part in the project since 25/11/2019 until 19/03/2020. The sending organization was Servicio Civil Internacional, and the hosting organization was Mreza Udruga Zagor. They supported me through the whole project, so it was more easy to do a volunteering activity like that, because they can offer you help whenever you need and you feel more protected.

I also participated in the On-Arrival Training for volunteers, in Orahovica. There I met other volunteers that were doing an EVS in Croatia. We shared our points of view, and we learnt how to solve problems that can happen during a project.

Secondly, my main tasks within the organization were Spanish courses for young people who were interested to improve their knowledge of this language. It was awesome, because I never thought that so many people would be eager to improve or learn from zero their Spanish! The spanish lessons took place in a room near the office of Mreza Udruga Zagor and in a high school from Zabok.

I have to admit that I was scared before I was going to start, because a lot of people wanted to join the lessons. But with some time and practice I enjoyed a lot the activities.

They were great students, I think they learnt some basic things of the language and they had fun with the games that I prepared for them :).

Besides that, I participated in Intercultural events, for young people who wanted to join them, where I could share my volunteering experiences, and they could ask whatever they wanted to know. They were curious about Spain, the weather, the language, the people, the football...

Moreover, I want to talk about how was the life in Zabok. First, I have to say that the other volunteer, Alex, from UK, was very helpful for me. He had been some months before I arrived to Croatia, so he could give me many advices. Also Tom, the mentor, he was supporting me since the first day, and offered me plans to go out in the town.

In general, life in Zabok is very similar than the life in Madrid, although Zabok is much smaller. The people was open and friendly, they have very good places to go out and have fun in the town. The beer that they drink is much better than in Spain. Also they have beautiful natural places surrounding Zabok where you can go in your free time.

The acommodation was really nice, warm during the winter, with TV and Internet, more than enough for me.

I think that this was an unique experience, not only for the people who participated but also for me. I could improve my speaking skills, I shared with lot of people my knowledge of Spanish, I learnt how to organize games so the activities were more interesting and I was able to learn a bit more of English, because people in Croatia speaks better than we do in Spain.

I hope this article was interesting for you, good luck with your project!

Jorge